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ABSTRACT

This study explores higher education's failure to incorporate the role of the Academic Vice President (AVP) into campus fund-raising efforts. A literature review found that the Academic Vice President/Provost was rarely mentioned by position as having an instrumental role in fund-raising activities. In a survey of 32 fund-raising consulting firm leaders, respondents agreed that relatively little explicit attention is paid in development literature to the role of Academic Vice Presidents/Provosts on university campuses. Explanations were volunteered for this situation. A survey of 27 chief academic officers of Jesuit higher education institutions found that only one-fifth of the respondents described AVPs as playing a major role in fund-raising. Reasons for AVPs' lack of involvement in fund-raising are outlined. Ways of integrating this position into an institutional team approach are offered. These include clarifying the role of the AVP in fund-raising, conducting periodically scheduled planning meetings with other key players to build necessary bridges, and expanding the AVP's role in energizing the internal "grass roots" base of capital campaigns. (JDD)

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ROLE OF THE ACADEMIC VICE PRESIDENT IN FUND-RAISING

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Although we are living in an era when development activities are playing a critical role in the destinies of U.S. campuses, there is a surprising and significant gap in the literature on advancement strategies in higher education. Sitting between a University President to whom the Vice President for Academic Affairs (or Provost) reports and any number of college deans who are periodically evaluated for their overall performance by the AVP is the role of what would appear to be the most overlooked pivotal position in the history of fund-raising by post-secondary institutions.

Based on a review of the existing literature, a survey of key representatives of major fund-raising firms, and a sample of opinion from one sub-set of chief academic officers (AVPs), this study addresses the question of whether higher education's failure to account seriously for the role of the Academic Vice President may prove unnecessarily costly to campus fund-raising efforts in the nineties. It suggests some manageable ways of integrating this position into an institutional team approach.

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THE LITERATURE

Any extensive reading of fund-raising literature quickly identifies the importance of the Board of Trustees, President, Chief Development Officer, various advancement staffers and, increasingly, college deans involved in the "landing" of prospective contributors. Select faculty members, too, are occasionally highlighted as donor sources as well as important aides in cultivating alumni and other prospects at special events or one on one. Virtually nowhere, however, is the Academic Vice President/Provost mentioned explicitly by position as having an instrumental role in campus game plans. This official, instead, is likely to go relatively unnoticed or be referenced in a passing manner under a broad rubric of "other" incidental academic players who could become interested in helping out as time and circumstance permit.

This traditional mind-set is ironic in light of what is often perceived to be the core dilemma in institutional fund-raising: whether to move organizationally in the direction of centralized University-driven campaigns or decentralized school-based drives. As Desmond and Ryan wonder, "How do you strike the correct balance between centralized fund-raising and raising money by school and college? Perhaps this is the major 'how-to' fund-raising question that large universities face today." * Answers to this focal concern will swirl around the number two administrative officer of

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a University's management team, whether or not the chief academic officer's role is conceptualized clearly in the process.

A survey to which 32 of 68 Fund Raising consulting firm leaders responded (for a 47% response rate from all firms listed in the Fund Raising and Development section of the 1988 Membership Directory of the Council for Advancement and Support of Education*), produced two interesting observations of the existing literature.

First, an overwhelming 97% of the responding consultants agreed that, "In comparison to the frequency with which references are made to the fund-raising responsibilities of college deans, relatively little explicit attention is paid in development literature to the role of Academic Vice Presidents/Provosts on University campuses." These representative explanations were volunteered:

- Traditionally, V.P.'s have not been involved in the specific schools or departments, so deans have served as more knowledgeable spokespersons on fund-raising calls.
- For much too long at far too many institutions, the chief academic officer has had far too little to do with fund-raising.
- In the past, many Provosts/Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs have shown little or no interest in fund-raising and development activities.
- They are a resource which all too many of us overlook, as both advocates of the institution, and even solicitors, especially with foundations.

Second, only four of these prominent leaders (12.5%) could identify "any suggested readings/references to the role of the AVP/Provost in fund-raising." And not one of the identified readings was targeted in a more than peripheral manner to the development role of the University's chief academic officer.

The virtual absence of such references following an extensive independent bibliographic search provided no surprise. For all practical purposes, sustained documentation on the subject is not only absent, but in one case, in a recent article by Bronson C. Davis, this role is the object of gentle humor. Having issued a lengthy list of time consuming development tasks to novice deans, he quips, "... you may be contemplating becoming a provost or, better yet, a professor again." * In any case, the understated view of one consultant respondent would appear accurate: "There is a serious lack of materials on the AVP/Provost in fund-raising."

THE SURVEYS

In addition to the fund-raising consultants survey noted above, a second set of questionnaires was mailed to the chief academic officers of this nation's 28 Jesuit higher education institutions. They were selected not only because a high response rate was readily achievable (96.4%, as all but one answered), but because the respondents from these campuses share missions and constituencies with universities and colleges which have strong

enough reputations for academic rigor to be of interest to academicians throughout the country. *

The academic vice presidents from Jesuit institutions have an average of five deans reporting to them (with a range of three to ten). As a class, although they do not statistically replicate public or other independent college counterparts throughout higher education, their perspectives would appear to provide at least one reasonable springboard for the sort of further analysis noted below.

The purposes of simultaneously surveying the professional fund-raising consultants and the Jesuit school officers were essentially two-fold: (1) to assess key "insider" and "outsider" perceptions with respect to current role expectations, and (2) to surmise what could or should be done to improve institutional advancement capacities as they might relate to the role of chief academic officers. Where opinions converge, such findings are deemed noteworthy because of their potential to reflect a significant national match between critical internal and external campus perspectives.

VIEWS OF THE AVP ROLE AS IT IS

The consultants were asked to agree or disagree with this statement: "In practice, the advancement role of the University AVP/Provost is more apt to be determined by each administration's

unique governance structure and personalities than is generally the case with the more widely appreciated fund-raising role expectations of College deans." Most readily agreed (82.8%) while relatively small minorities either disagreed (10.9%) or offered uncertain answers (6.2%). When asked to make rough estimates of how often AVPs, in comparison to deans, "regularly played [fund-raising] roles that could be described as 'major' rather than minor or incidental," only one-fifth of the consultants (20.4%) described AVPs as having regularly played major roles while nearly half (47.4%) so characterized the deans. One respondent offered this arguable observation, "The deans of the colleges within the universities are much more identified with the academic priorities and the expenditure of funds related thereto than the AVP/Provost."

The Jesuit institution Vice Presidents, interestingly, saw virtually no distinction in role definition between their own fund-raising responsibilities and those of the deans. More than two-thirds (68.5%) thought that their roles and the deans' were "just about as clearly defined." The remainder split almost evenly between those who believed the deans' roles were better defined (16.7%) and those who believed their own to be clearer (14.8%). Of greater explanatory significance, perhaps, were these typical comments which suggested relatively widespread undifferentiated role ambiguity within many academic sector leadership quarters:

- But none of our roles in fund-raising/advancement are clearly defined.

- Fund-raising/advancement roles for deans & AVP are not defined at all except with regard to Foundation Grant proposals.
- None are clearly defined.
- All roles could use clarification related to fund-raising.

When asked how their own fund-raising/advancement roles are most often determined, the Jesuit school AVPs' answers were scattered. They pointed to: the particular requirements of individual projects and the interests of those involved (34.6%); the President (23.1%); the Vice President for Development (15.4%); the President in conjunction with the Vice President for Development (11.5%); the (one) Executive V.P. (4%); and by no one really (11.5%).

The composite impression which emerges from both sets of respondents as well as the literature is one of fuzzy role definition, at best, with respect to existing fund-raising expectations of the University's chief academic officer. At worst, this leader may have no important place in directly serving the institutional quest for dollars from private sector donors.

There are understandable reasons why Academic Vice Presidents have not been heavily involved in advancement. Some are simply historical and habitual reflections of presidential and vice presidential conceptions of what academic officers are supposed to be doing on campus. Others relate to touchier issues of political turf; the already over-crowded base-touching agendas of development

offices; and the varying levels of competence of chief academic officers in handling advancement responsibilities. Probably most important is the perceived problem of an academic vice president's lack of availability due to thin staffing and heavy internal scheduling pressures which characteristically cramp the best of intentions. After all, provosts are often thought to be intra-campus manager/leaders while Presidents and others need to be free to represent their universities externally.

THE AVP ROLE: HOW IT COULD BE

As comfortable as traditional categorizations of specialized functional responsibilities may appear, the very organizational position of a chief academic officer would seem, nevertheless, to compel this person's strategic political involvement and expertise in the planning and implementation of successful money raising campaigns. Coloia remarks on the importance of the chief development officer's "peer relationship with other top administrators." * Luskin and Warren's call for "the team approach to college development" is not uncommon, particularly in light of their concern that, "A development program has only a small probability of success without team skill building -- first on the level of the core office, then on the management level, and finally on the presidential and governing board level." * If Trachtman is correct when he writes, "...the central administration must serve as a bridge between the development office and the faculty [as] it must continually interpret the goals and activities of each group

to the others, and guide these activities so that they reinforce one another," * then any tensions involving academic sector autonomy versus cooperation will necessarily work their way through the organizational structure of the chief academic officer. Even Barden (who focusses almost exclusively on the need for a "partnership" between the dean and development office) concedes that assistance may be needed in working with "The Impossible Dean." He advises, "If need be, bring in someone with clout, a vice president, president, provost, board member or consultant -- to give the dean the word." *

Most notable, on the political front alone, is the informed perspective an academic vice president can usually add to such touchy yet practical questions as these: knowing which academic program priorities to highlight over others in meeting multiple objectives; assessing how the uneven advancement capabilities of academic colleagues might square with particular donor sensibilities; helping to meld recommendations about how unrestricted donations should be allocated; judging which internal communications vehicles are likely to make a notable difference among potential campus participants if properly fine-tuned; being able to help mediate differences in outlook between the presidential vantage point and attitudes of those who tend daily to an institution's grass roots, etc.

Beyond theoretical organizational dynamics, a clear majority of the

fund-raising consultants surveyed, concluded, "for the most part, the advancement role of University Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs/Provosts ought to be either ... expanded moderately [46.9%) ... [or] ... expanded considerably [43.8%] ...." Only 6.3% suggested that it should "remain at present campus levels"; none thought it should be diminished; and one (3.1%) offered no answer. The AVPs from Jesuit institutions were only somewhat more reticent to see an expanded role. Almost two-thirds (63%) believed their roles should be "expanded moderately," while one-third believed their roles should "remain at present campus levels." Whereas one VP (3.7%) sought "considerable" expansion, none preferred to see a diminution of such responsibilities.

STRATEGIC POINTS OF VICE PRESIDENTIAL INVOLVEMENT

Toward gaining more specific role definition insights into the question of when and how chief academic officers might best serve institutional development efforts, the consultants and AVPs were given an identical list of standard fund-raising activities. They were asked, "realistically speaking ... [whether] the role of the University Academic Vice President/Provost [should] generally be major or minor with respect to supporting each [of nine identified] advancement functions" and any others they might add.

One of the listed activities, providing assistance in "Planning a Capital Campaign," was overwhelmingly thought to require a major rather than minor role for the chief academic officer.

Approximately nine of ten fund-raising consultants (89.1%) and Jesuit school vice presidents (92.6%) so indicated. A second meaningful convergence identified "Preparing Foundation Grant Proposals" as a major responsibility. The fund-raisers agreed by a 62.5% margin, and 61.1% of the AVP responses were reflective of this orientation.

The only split in viewpoints occurred with respect to the AVP's potential role in making "Direct Contact with Major Donor Prospects." More than two thirds (68.8%) of the fund-raisers agreed that this should be a major responsibility, but over half (53.7%) of the AVPs thought this job should be minor.

A consensus re-emerged around the issue of when AVPs and Provosts generally ought to remain available, but outside the mainstream of development activities. The remaining six listed functions were believed by majorities in both groups to be appropriately "minor" for chief academic officers: planned giving; prospect research; annual giving; institutional publicity generation; implementing a capital campaign; and approaching corporations. A small scattering of additional roles were also volunteered as possible responsibilities for AVPs in helping to meet institutional development goals: general university-wide planning and advocacy; speaking to volunteers, donors and alumni at important events; case statement development; meeting with volunteer fund-raising committees; providing support to other administrators engaged in

fund-raising; educating the faculty about the role of philanthropy; hosting visits by representatives of corporations and foundations.

Regardless of the various forms which advancement participation might take for vice presidents, an active interest at several strategic points in the process was not unexpected in light of one of McGuiness' conclusions. In his "...Study of Fund-Raising Programs at Selected State Colleges and Regional Universities," he discovered, with respect to the cultivation of prospective donors, "... as the perceived effectiveness of senior administrative staff increases, so does total giving." * As one consultant observed, "So much depends upon the expertise of the individual, but generally speaking AVPs could be tremendous assets to advancement officers."

A university's chief academic officer probably cannot, and certainly should not, assume an institutional leadership role which might allow him/her, as one consultant warns, to " 'run off' with development." Chief academic officers rarely have the training, time or inclination to take charge in an arena which primarily belongs to the President, Board of Trustees, and Vice President for Advancement who reports to the CEO. The majority of experts in the field would most likely not go so far as one consultant who admonishes, "Nearly all the fund-raising expectations of the President should be equally expected of the Provost." However, like deans, the role definition of chief academic officers,

particularly in the anticipated fiscal climate of the nineties, cannot be ad hoc and incidental amidst revenue raising campaigns which will profoundly affect the destiny of programs they shall be charged with administering. The advantages of intimate participation in fund-raising, furthermore, pay significant intangible dividends to AVPs when their heightened awareness of external community concerns enrich their perspectives on internal operations.

The mechanisms for identifying precisely how chief academic officers can make a difference in fund-raising must vary from campus to campus in accord with local political traditions and structures. In some cases, periodically scheduled (perhaps bi-monthly) planning meetings among the President, Vice President for Development, Academic Vice President and other key players can build necessary bridges. On other campuses, advancement strategy sessions co-chaired by the vice presidents and attended by deans and relevant staffers may prove most useful -- particularly where foundations research and presentations may be required. In larger institutions, follow-up meetings with chairs of academic departments might be jointly scheduled by advancement and academic leaders in order to help address the predictable centralization - decentralization tensions noted above. In some instances, academic and development managers might choose to work closely with an outside consultant who may be brought in for the express purpose of organizing public relations and other revenue-raising brainstorming sessions that could be greatly strengthened by active faculty, staff and student involvement.

CONCLUSION

Means of collaboration will necessarily vary with campus size and complexity as well as individual personalities and interests, among many other factors. What this study suggests is the need for a hard look at institutional policies toward: clarifying and modestly expanding the Academic Vice President's role on most university campuses -- especially in energizing the internal "grass roots" base of capital campaigns; preparing foundation proposals; and, where the President may so designate, in making selected major donor calls.

Three fertile areas for future analysis are suggested: the replication of this study with surveys of chief academic officers from small colleges, the public sector and other institutional clusters; an illumination of attitudes of presidents and chief development officers toward academic leadership involvement in their traditional territorial waters; and the generation of case studies of any highly successful chief academic officers who may have made significant inroads in this field.

In the absence of contrary findings, the observation of one fund-raising consultant would appear practical. He remarks, "Common sense dictates that [AVP roles] should be expanded and their influence enhanced." Wherever a vigorous team approach to a comprehensive drive requires utilization of the full internal human resources of a campus community, this conclusion seems reasonable.

*Footnotes to follow. See attached listing of survey participants.

32 Fund-Raising Firms Whose Leaders Responded to Survey in 1988

American City Bureau - Rosemont, Illinois

Anderson, Cole, and Dollhopf, Inc. - New Haven, Connecticut

Bailey and Murphy Company - Boston, Massachusetts

Barnes & Roche, Inc. - Rosemont, Pennsylvania

Brakeley, John Price Jones, Inc. - Stamford, Connecticut

Donald A. Campbell and Company, Inc. - Chicago, Illinois

Cargill Associates, Inc. - Fort Worth, Texas

Community Service Bureau, Inc. - Dallas, Texas

Coxe & Associates, Inc. - Atlanta, Georgia

Development Management Associates - Long Beach, California

Charles R. Feldstein and Co., Inc. - Chicago, Illinois

James W. Frick Associates, Inc. - South Bend, Indiana

Goodale Associates - New York, New York

John Grenzebach & Associates, Inc. - Chicago, Illinois

The Bill Heim Company - Granville, Ohio

Jennings, Hood, & Associates - Richmond, Virginia

Kendrick and Associates - Greenville, South Carolina

Ketchum, Inc. - Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Marts & Lundy, Inc. - Lyndhurst, New Jersey

Robert E. Nelson Associates, Inc. - Oak Brook, Illinois

New Boston Group - Cambridge, Massachusetts

Carol O'Brien Associates - Ithaca, New York

Payne, Wester, Forrester & Olsson - New York, New York

Pentera, Inc. - Indianapolis, Indiana

Gary W. Phillips & Associates - Los Angeles, California

Resource Development, Inc. - Springfield, Missouri

Ross, Johnston, & Kersting, Inc. - Durham, North Carolina

Robert F. Sharpe & Co., Inc. - Memphis, Tennessee

Snelling, Kolb & Kuhnle, Inc. - South Burlington, Vermont

Staley/Robeson/Ryan/St. Lawrence - Port Chester, New York

Teleconnect Data Base Marketing Company - Cedar Rapida, Iowa

Ward, Dreshman & Reinhardt, Inc. - Worthington, Ohio

America's 28 Jesuit Institutions
(producing 27 AVP respondents in 1988)

Boston College

Canisius College

Creighton University

Fairfield University

Fordham University

Georgetown University

Gonzaga University

College of Holy Cross

John Carroll University

LeMoyne College

Loyola College, Maryland

Loyola Marymount University

Loyola University, Chicago

Loyola University, New Orleans

Marquette University

Regis College

Rockhurst College

St. Joseph's University

St. Louis University

St. Peter's College

Santa Clara University

Seattle University

Spring Hill College

University of Detroit

University of Scranton

University of San Francisco

Wheeling Jesuit College

Xavier University